

backed proposal for a political solution to the Kosovo crisis. Yugoslav forces reinforced positions in the province during the March negotiation and, as negotiations failed, intensified the ethnic cleansing of Albanians from Kosovo. Yugoslav security and paramilitary forces thereby created a humanitarian crisis in which approximately half of Kosovo's population of 2 million had been displaced from the province and an unknown but apparently large portion of the remaining population had been displaced within Kosovo by mid-April.

On April 30, 1999, I issued Executive Order 13121, "Blocking Property of the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), the Republic of Serbia, and the Republic of Montenegro, and Prohibiting Trade Transactions Involving the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) in Response to the Situation in Kosovo." Executive Order 13121 revises and supplements Executive Order 13088 to expand the blocking regime by revoking an exemption for certain financial transactions provided in Executive Order 13088; to impose a general ban on all U.S. exports and reexports to and imports from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) (the "FRY (S&M)") or the Governments of the FRY (S&M), the Republic of Serbia, or the Republic of Montenegro; and to prohibit any transaction or dealing by a U.S. person related to trade with or to the FRY (S&M) or the Governments of the FRY (S&M), the Republic of Serbia, or the Republic of Montenegro. In addition, Executive Order 13121 directs that special consideration be given to Montenegro and the humanitarian needs of refugees from Kosovo and other civilians within the FRY (S&M) in the implementation of the Order. Finally, Executive Order 13121 also supplements Executive Order 13088 to direct that the commercial sales of agricultural commodities and products, medicine, and medical equipment for civilian end-use in the FRY (S&M) be authorized subject to appropriate safeguards to prevent diversion to military, paramilitary, or political use by the Governments of the FRY (S&M), the Republic of Serbia, or the Republic of Montenegro.

This situation continues to pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy interests, and the economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond June 9, 2000.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
May 25, 2000.

**Message to the Congress  
Transmitting a Report on the  
National Emergency With Respect to  
the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia  
(Serbia and Montenegro), the  
Bosnian Serbs, and Kosovo**

*May 25, 2000*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) emergency declared in Executive Order 12808 on May 30, 1992, and with respect to the Kosovo emergency declared in Executive Order 13088 on June 9, 1998.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
May 25, 2000.

**Remarks at an Asian Pacific  
American Institute for Congressional  
Studies Dinner**

*May 25, 2000*

Thank you very much. Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. We had a wonderful day today at the White House. For all of you who were there, I thank you for coming. I thank my good friend Norm Mineta. He thought he had retired from public life when he left the Congress, and he found that there is life

after politics, but there's no life without politics. [Laughter] I got him back in, and I thank him for that.

I also want to thank the Members of the United States House who are here. I have no glasses and this list—[laughter]—so I'm going to show my age here. But the chair of the APA Caucus, Bob Underwood; Lane Evans, Shelley Berkley, Julian Dixon, Donna Christensen Green, and Phil Crane, thank you all for being here. I'd also like to acknowledge one Member of Congress who is not here, who led our efforts on China PNTR, Bob Matsui. I thank him as well for what he did. Thank you all.

I want to thank our Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Bill Lann Lee, who is here. I had a lot of fun today with Dolly Gee. I think she's still here; she's not on her honeymoon yet. Thank you very much for being here. And I want to thank all the people at the White House, but especially Laura Efurd, in my Office of Public Liaison. The Director of our office, Mary Beth Cahill, came over here with me tonight, and we were laughing that—you may know, I had to go to a memorial service for a young friend of mine today in Rhode Island. That's why I'm a little late. And when I leave you, I'm going to the Sons of Italy dinner. [Laughter] So I said to Mary Beth, "Here we are, two Irish going to the Asian-Pacific dinner and the Sons of Italy dinner. Is this a great country or what?" [Laughter]

Let me begin by just saying a heartfelt thank you to the members of the Asian American Pacific Institute for the support you have given to the efforts that Vice President Gore and I have made over these last 7½ years. It's meant more than you can possibly know. I was here 5 years ago, as Norm said, when you launched the institute. You've come a long way since then. You have embodied the wisdom of the Chinese proverb that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. And you have taken a lot of steps in the last 5 years.

You've gotten more Asian-Pacific Americans interested, informed, and involved in the political process. You've had an impact on a lot of vital issues. You've helped to form more unity among the great diversity of the

Asian-Pacific community in the United States.

When I was here in '95, I said, if we only understand what an incredible resource our people are, we can have more opportunities than any other country. I still believe that. I think no nation is so well positioned for this new century, for a global economy, and an increasingly globalized society, as the United States, if we are prepared to make the most of our diverse talents, our heritage, our contacts, what we know, what we feel, what we understand.

The first Japanese immigrants came here in 1843. Their spirit helped to build this country. The people who came to build the transcontinental railroad, over 130 years ago, and are still throughout the Mississippi Delta and my home region, helped to build this country. The people who helped to put the first Asian-American in Congress in 1957 helped to build this country. And so have all of you.

Now there are more than 9 million Americans who trace their roots to Asia and the islands of the Pacific, more than 25 nationalities, more than 75 languages, hundreds of different ethnic groups, all with a long, rich legacy of working hard and overcoming obstacles to pursue the American dream. You have greatly enriched the quality and the character of the United States, and for that I am profoundly grateful.

You have strengthened our common values of family, faith, and work, and our common vision of a better future for our children. For 7½ years, I have tried to reinforce those values and advance that future. I am grateful that we are in the longest economic expansion in history, with the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years—32 years now—with the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, a 20-year low in poverty, over a 10 percent drop in poverty among Asian-Pacific Americans alone.

Last year the SBA approved loans to the Asian-Pacific community in America exceeding \$2 billion, more than 3½ times the amount approved in the year before I took office. I have tried to make sure that we would go forward together.

I'm grateful that our social fabric is on the mend, something of immense concern to all of you—crime at a 25-year low; teen births down 7 years in a row; adoptions up 30 percent; welfare rolls cut in half, to their lowest level since 1968; expanded Head Start; 90 percent of our kids immunized against serious diseases for the first time in our history; 21 million people took advantage of the family and medical leave law; 5 million families benefited by the HOPE scholarships to send their kids to college; 150,000 young Americans, many of them Asian-Pacific Americans, have served their communities in AmeriCorps. I am grateful for all of that.

Our country, I believe, is moving to develop a national security strategy for the 21st century which keeps a strong defense but relies on cooperation wherever possible. And I do believe that far more important than the obvious economic benefits, it is the chance to have a more secure future. That was the most important reason for the House of Representatives adopting the permanent normal trade relations with China yesterday, and I'm very, very grateful to them for doing that.

Now, having said that, you may have noticed that this is an election year. *[Laughter]* Since it's the first time I haven't been on the ballot in 26 years, I've hardly noticed it at all, but—*[laughter]*—I understand. Most days I'm okay about it. And so I want to ask you to do something that comes naturally to you, whether you're Democrats or Republicans or independents. I want to urge you to use this year to mobilize your communities and those beyond your communities to have the right approach. Because the great question here is what are we going to do with our prosperity? What are we going to do with our increasing social harmony? What are we going to do with our relative security in a still dangerous world? How are we going to make the most of a moment that truly is unprecedented in the lives of all of us in this room?

And maybe it's never happened to you, but at least I can speak for the Irish. Everyone I know over 30 has made a mistake in his or her personal or professional life, not because things were going so poorly but because things were going so well. Sometimes

when things are going well, you break your concentration. You think there are no consequences to taking the momentary benefit instead of the long-term look.

And I have decided that I will try to devote myself this year to getting the American people to take the long view, to say, "What are we going to do with this magic moment?" And I think we ought to say, "Okay, we can do things now we couldn't do 7 or 8 years ago," when I was preoccupied, overwhelmingly, with trying to turn the country around and get people together and go beyond the divisive politics that had paralyzed us into a rhetoric in Washington that I sort of characterized as "I've got an idea. You've got an idea. Let's fight." *[Laughter]* And we're trying to move beyond that.

And that's how we balanced the budget and produced this surplus. When I leave office, we will have paid off about \$360 billion of our national debt. I confess even I didn't think we could do that in 1992. If I had gone before the people in '92 and said, "Vote for me, and when I leave office, we'll have 3 years of paying down the debt," you would have said, "He seems like a nice young man, but he's a little touched. We'd better send him home." *[Laughter]*

So I ask you to think of that. What are those big questions? Well, first of all, in spite of our growing prosperity, there are still people in places untouched by it. And we ought to take this opportunity to give them a chance to be a part of the American dream. Just for example: almost half of all Cambodian-Americans, two out of three Hmong-Americans still live in poverty. Over half of the South-Asian-Americans have earned a bachelor's degree, far above the 37 percent national average. But less than 6 percent of Cambodian- and Laotian-Americans have completed college in an age in which getting a world-class education is a prerequisite to full participation in the global economy.

We can't rest until every community, every family, every individual has a chance to be a part of this magnificent opportunity that so many of you have worked so hard to create. That's why I signed that Executive order establishing the Advisory Commission. The Commission will work on ways to get the information we need to make the decisions that

ought to be made to help the discreet groups of Asian-Pacific Americans that are still not fully participating. They will help us to lower the cultural and linguistic and other barriers to health and social services. But we have to do more.

Just this week we had what I think is a truly historic meeting in the White House that was, understandably, sort of overlooked in the great amount of attention given to the China vote. But the Speaker of the House of Representatives and more than a dozen Members of Congress equally divided in both parties came together in the White House, and we said, "Look, we're trying open new markets abroad, but we have to create new markets at home. And we want to give people the same incentives to invest in poor areas of America and in the people of America that aren't fully participating we now give people to invest in poor areas throughout the world." It's an historic moment. And if we pass this legislation—and I believe we will—it could be the most significant antipoverty initiative in a generation. I hope all of you will support it, without regard to your party.

What are some of the other big questions? I won't go through the answers or what I think are the answers. The important thing is, you have to decide what you think the answers are. How are we going to guarantee every child a world-class education and make sure everybody can go to college? How are we going to make sure that people who work for a living don't raise their children in poverty? The child poverty rate in America is still about 18 percent, as wealthy as we are. How are we going to help people to balance work and family—something that many Asian-Americans have been brilliant at, but it's not easy.

How are we going to make sure that, in this new and difficult world, we continue to be a force for peace and reconciliation, and help other people resolve their racial and ethnic and religious conflicts that are leading to so much turmoil and could disrupt our future? What are our obligations to people in the poorest parts of the world that are being plagued by AIDS, malaria, and TB, and other problems? All the children that are dying out there every day just because they don't have access to safe water. If we do

something about that, won't that strengthen our security and make us more prosperous in the years ahead, because other people can raise their children in a good environment?

And how are we going to build one America here at home, after we make our country the safest big country in the world? What are we going to do about the aging of America, when two-thirds of our people will be working, but one-third will be retired—our adults? Well, maybe more older people will work. We lifted the earnings limit on Social Security, almost unanimously. It was a very good thing to do. But unless you young people dramatically increase your birth rates or we dramatically increase immigration when all us baby boomers retire, we have to ask ourselves, how can we preserve the integrity of Social Security and Medicare—and, I think, add a prescription drug benefit for the seniors—in ways that don't burden their ability to raise our children, or our children's ability to raise our grandchildren? How can we do that?

And to me, most important of all, still by far, is how can we build one America? How can we tear down the remaining barriers between us rooted in our differences?

I have never believed that we should try to homogenize America. I think we're becoming more interesting every day. You obviously agree by the reaction you had when I told you I was going to the Sons of Italy dinner later. [*Laughter*] The trick is to respect our diversity, to go beyond it, to celebrate our diversity, to actually think it's a great thing and have fun with it, but to recognize that the reason we can enjoy it is because our common humanity and our common respect for the values of our Constitution are even more important than our diversity. That's the trick.

And the first thing we've got to do is make sure everybody has the chance to participate. That's why we've got 70 Asian-Pacific Americans in the administration. That's why I nominated Bill Lann Lee. And I still hope the Senate will have a blast of enlightenment and confirm him. I keep working on that. Before I took office, it had been 14 years since an Asian-Pacific American had been nominated for a Federal judgeship. We have appointed five so far.

Yesterday the Senate—I want to thank them—I’ve given them such grief because they’ve been so slow confirming my appointments, but yesterday they did confirm 16 judges. So I thank Senator Lott and the Senate for doing that, and I hope it is the beginning of a trend. And I hope that trend will include Dolly Gee from California.

I think we should adopt hate crimes legislation. I think we ought to pass—I think we ought to pass the “Employment Non-Discrimination Act.” I think that people—I think that every school in this country should have programs which bring different people together. And if the student body is not diverse, they ought to bring people in from outside to talk, to ask questions, to understand what it is about all these myriad people that make up America that are different and what it is we have in common. I think this is profoundly important.

And so I will just leave you with this. I’ve had a great time. You’ve been good to me. I’m not done. We’re going to get a lot of things done in the next 7 months. But you, through this organization and other efforts, have been brought into the mainstream of American public debate. You unite people across all kinds of ethnic and cultural lines and religious lines because of your common Asian-Pacific heritage—also, different philosophical and political lines. But true to your values, you can have a pivotal effect in getting America to take this millennial year to ask and answer the question, what will we do with this moment of good fortune?

You know, nothing lasts forever. And that keeps us going through the bad times, knowing that nothing lasts forever. But in good times, it means we must be careful, vigilant. We must nurture and be grateful for these opportunities and make the most of them.

So I ask you to think about that. If I were to receive a vision from heaven tonight that I was going to pass from this Earth tomorrow, and I could have one wish, and God said, “Now, I’m not a genie, you don’t get three wishes. I’ll just give you one.” I would wish for us to be one America, genuinely one America, because we’ve got hundreds of stories in this room that illustrate there is nothing that we cannot achieve if we’re given a chance, a fair chance, and if we understand

that everybody matters, everybody has got a role to play, and we all do better when we help each other. It’s a simple little formula in the digital age, but it will carry us right where we need to go. And you can make sure it happens.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. at the Capitol Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to former Representative Norman Y. Mineta, chairman, Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies; Virgin Islands Delegate Donna M.C. Christensen; and Dolly M. Gee, nominee for U.S. District Judge for the Central District of California. The President also referred to APA, the Asian Pacific American Caucus.

## Remarks at the Sons of Italy Foundation Dinner

May 25, 2000

Well, thank you for the warm welcome. I am delighted to be here. I’m sorry to be late. I got here in time to see Mario Andretti’s film, or at least to hear it. And I want to begin by congratulating Mario Andretti and Connie Stevens on their award and congratulating you on honoring them.

I was, today—the reason I had to be a little late tonight is, I’d been forced to go to Rhode Island. I had to go to a memorial service today for a friend of mine. And then when I came back, I stopped by the Asian-Pacific American dinner tonight. And I brought Mary Beth Cahill, my Director of Public Liaison. Now, she’s Irish. I’m Irish. We went to the Asian-Pacific dinner, and then we came to the Sons of Italy dinner. Is this a great country, or what? *[Laughter]*

I want to thank all the Members of Congress who are here: Michael Capuano, Rosa DeLauro, Peter DeFazio, Nick Lampson, Dave Weldon. And I know John LaFalce was here, and since he’s from New York, I think I’ll mention him anyway. *[Laughter]*

I want to—I see Ambassador Salles back there. Thank you, sir, for representing your country so well. And our U.S. Ambassador to Hungary has come all the way back, Peter Tufo, thank you. Thank you, Paul Polo. Thank you, Phil Piccigallo. Thank you, Phil Boncore.